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SUBJECT: "TAIWAN DAILY" COMMENTARY GENTLY CRITICIZES  
PRESIDENT CHEN SHUI-BIAN'S LEADERSHIP STYLE

Summary: The pro-independence Chinese-language "Taiwan Daily" Tuesday carried a commentary by Dr. Chen Po-chih, chairman of the Taiwan Think Tank, in which he suggested how "a president for all people" should act. Note that President Chen Shui-bian announced in the wake of last December's legislative elections, in which the ruling DPP failed to win a majority of the seats, that he would resign from the chairmanship of the DPP and be "a president for all people." Chen Po-chih's article offers gentle criticism of President Chen's leadership style. A summary of the article follows.

"The President for All People [Should] Lead All People to Establish Consensus"

Taiwan Think Tank Chairman Chen Po-chih wrote in the pro-independence "Taiwan Daily" (02/01):

President Chen Shui-bian announced last December that he wants to be "a president for all people," and in that same vein he resigned from the chairmanship of the DPP after the Pan-Green alliance failed to win a majority of the seats in the Legislative Yuan. In principle, a president who is elected the leader of a state is naturally a president for all people. He acts on behalf of the country and should serve the interests of all its people. Since President Chen has placed an emphasis on being a president for all people, he should adopt some more specialized approaches in order to fulfill his goal.

The first possible approach for President Chen to take, according to Dr. Chen Po-chih, is that "He should no longer get involved in any campaign-related affairs and should not support any particular political party or candidates." In the meantime, however, President Chen must not entirely neglect the policies of his own party, which were proposed during his presidential campaign. "A president for all people should not give up his party's policies or advocacy [positions] and simply act as an independent," Dr. Chen writes.

The second possible approach for "a president of all people" to take, Dr. Chen suggests, is to manage the differences between the Executive Yuan and the Legislative Yuan in an impartial manner. According to Taiwan's constitution, the president appoints the premier, and the appointee is obliged to carry out the policies that the president proposes. If the Legislative Yuan does not completely agree with the policies suggested by the Executive Yuan, it is constitutionally acceptable for the president to facilitate negotiations between the two to work out a consensus. "If the president can adopt an unprejudiced and neutral position when coordinating the differences [between the Executive and Legislative Yuans] and does not insist on taking the stand of his own political party with regard to those policies, he can also be called as a president for all people."

According to Dr. Chen Po-chih, "For Taiwan's current stage, a more valuable option for a president ... is to work on a higher level with a broader vision by contemplating the interests of all his people, guiding his people to work out a long-term development direction for the country, and strengthening the consensuses of all the people." To do this and thereby adjust any relevant short-term goals and policies is what a state leader not under re-election pressure can and must do. In accomplishing this goal, the president would not only be "a president for all people" but would leave behind a good reputation in history, Dr. Chen writes.

For Taiwan, economic, financial, and public security issues are relatively short-term issues that can be dealt with by professionals. But for the long-term, issues such as bureaucratic restructuring, educational and judicial reform, and improvements regarding cross-Strait relations require the impartial leadership of a

president who can set up multi-party committees to plan and resolve them.

"A state leader is obliged to contemplate strategies to address these long-term problems, to mobilize more people to work on [achieving the country's] objectives, and to guide public opinion to form a greater consensus in the society," Chen writes. "A president who can advance a country's long-term development by working out a direction and strategy that all political parties will follow, he can be labeled a successful president for all people."

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